

## **Constructing Politico-Security Regionalism in Southern Africa: The Case of SADC**

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*This paper analyzes the mechanisms of politico-security regionalism in SADC with a special focus on the SADC Organ and the emergence of the SADC Mutual Defense Pact in 2003. The primary aim of this paper is not only to investigate the regional organization's methods of how to approach regional security issues, but also to question whether and to what extent SADC provides a regional response to security challenges. In doing so, emphasizing the utility of constructivism, this paper argues that SADC attempts to construct the politico-security regionalism which is made and remade by the regional member states in the post-Cold War era.*

**Keywords:** *Politico-Security Regionalism, SADC, the SADC Organ, the SADC Mutual Defense Pact, Constructivism and Southern Africa*

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

In the early 1990s, the Southern African region emerged from protracted conflicts, which were primarily connected with the Cold War and apartheid destabilization. The regional security frameworks since the 1970s had been marked by deep-rooted conflicts, mostly of inter-state character, propelled by a number of internal and external factors (e.g. Khadiagala 1994; Klotz 1995). Under the circumstance, SADCC (Southern African Development Coordination Conference) was formed in 1980 as part of the strategy of the Frontline States (FLS) to counter apartheid destabilization, reduce its members' economic dependence on South Africa, and coordinate foreign aid and investment in the region (Matlosa 2001:393-405).

Following the end of the Cold War, however, the move towards amity in the post-apartheid Southern African region coincided with the transformation of SADCC into SADC (Southern African Development Community) through the Windhoek Treaty in January 1992, which expanded to include the regional power, South Africa. Around this period, SADC attempted to establish the SADC Organ on Politics, Defense and Security (OPDS)<sup>1</sup> in 1996 with a view to "allowing more flexibility and timely response, at the highest level, to sensitive and potentially explosive situations" (SADC Communiqué 1996). In a new regional and international order, it became imperative for SADC<sup>2</sup> to set up its own security

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<sup>1</sup> The term of the Organ is seen by some as "borrowed" from the Organization of African Unity's (OAU) Central Organ of the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (Cilliers 1996: 2).

<sup>2</sup> Although SADC was mainly created as a socio-economic and developmental organization, but for the successful accomplishment of development and socio-economic prosperity we cannot estimate the value of peace and security in the region to excess. Although SADC defines itself as a developmental body, at the same time it sees itself as a sub-regional political (security) organization under the OAU (now the African Union: AU), that is, essentially a political organization (Solomon and Cilliers 1997: 200).

mechanism for striving towards political stability and ensuring collective security (Matlosa 2001:406).

Recently, we have witnessed the emergence of a number of regional approaches to security problems particularly in the developing world regions, with a better balance between the regions of the world (Alagappa 1993:439-67; Hettne 2001: 1-53; Pugh and Sidhu 2003: 1-7). Since the end of the Cold War, however, these regional approaches to security problems in the developing world, including the SADC region appear to go beyond the example of Europe by taking on forms of regionalism which are (radically) different from the integrationist model of the European Union (EU). In fact, some scholars have argued that the theories of regional integration that have dominated the analysis of the European Community (EC; presently, EU) provide only a partial and incomplete guide to understanding contemporary regionalism, particularly developing world regionalism (Hurrell 1995; Oden 1999).

Thus, in discussing the question of whether and how SADC attempts to shape and modify or change the process of globalization and regionalization in politico-security terms, it is necessary to utilize a multi-dimensionality of contemporary regionalism, so called "new regionalism,"<sup>3</sup> which would normally be based on constructivism as "one theoretical building block" (Hettne and Söderbaum 2002: 45). The multi-dimensional nature of contemporary regionalism based on constructivism, has rendered social structures such as norms and ideas just as important as material structures, such as the balance of military power, in shaping the patterns of regionalism.

Moreover, the important reason for using a constructivist perspective of international relations (IR) in this paper is that the rationalist theories such as neo-liberal institutionalism have limited relevance for SADC politico-security regionalism. Unlike the neo-liberal institutionalists' argument of limiting sovereignty for increased cooperation, the SADC states seem to be more interested in state-building by strengthening their sovereignty instead of limiting it. Even though neo-liberal institutionalists are interested in legalistic norms, coercive rules and material interests, the SADC states are inclined to retain informal and non-legalistic norm-based rules which are considered as problems and challenges to overcome in a changed international environment after the Cold War.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, like neo-realism, neo-liberal institutionalists take up rationalist and materialist conceptions of state behavior, often neglecting the "sociological and intersubjective processes underlying the emergence of cooperation" (Acharya 1998: 198-219). For these reasons, a constructivist perspective of IR is required of this paper to explain politico-security regionalism of SADC within the ideational as well as material factors.

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<sup>3</sup> The old regionalism, which was formed in a bipolar Cold War context, is apt to focus on a power-based or material based structure, whereas the new regionalism, which is taking shape in a more multipolar world order, focuses not only on material incentives, but also ideational forces such as norms, institutions and identity. Above all, a defining characteristic is that new regionalism can be better understood in an open-ended or process-oriented context than in a fixed or deterministic one (Schulz, Söderbaum and Öjendal 2001: 3-17).

<sup>4</sup> Although the formalization of the SADC Organ with the signing of the Protocol (on Politics, Defense and Security Cooperation) allowed SADC members to deal with regional security affairs within a legal framework, SADC members appear not to completely orient their organization towards a legally binding security architecture as was shown in the case of the SADC Mutual Defense Pact (see III-3).

This paper analyzes the mechanisms of politico-security regionalism in SADC with a special focus on the SADC Organ and the emergence of the SADC Mutual Defense Pact in 2003. The primary aim of this paper is not only to investigate the regional organization's methods of how to approach regional security issues, but also to question whether and to what extent SADC provides a regional response to security challenges. In doing so, emphasizing the utility of constructivism, this paper argues that SADC attempts to construct the politico-security regionalism which is made and remade by the regional member states in the post-Cold War era. This will, as a result, be conducive to understanding the character, nature and type of contemporary regionalism and regional security in Southern Africa.

## 2. LINKING POLITICO-SECURITY REGIONALISM AND CONSTRUCTIVISM

The term *politico-security regionalism* is composed of two different concepts: "political security" and "regionalism." Politico-security regionalism is concerned with political security in its regional context. By politico- or political security,<sup>5</sup> on the one hand, is meant the "security politics" of conflict and cooperation as social reality, which is defined and redefined by states as main actors. By regionalism,<sup>6</sup> on the other hand, is meant a bundle of political ideas, norms and interests, which are socially (re)constructed by regional states. In this context, it is important to note that "regional states,"<sup>7</sup> which denote the member states of regional grouping, should be distinguished from both global states and nation-states. In terms of the agents of regionalism, in fact, both terms "global states" and "nation-states" are not sufficient to explain the concept of politico-security regionalism.

From a globalist perspective of Wallerstein's world-system theory, states are normally seen as a substructure of international system to maintain a capitalist world system that contains a core, a periphery, and a semi-periphery (Viotti and Kauppi 1999: 341-60). From a neo-realist perspective of Waltz's structural realism, states (which can be regarded as a major

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<sup>5</sup> Given that "all [security] threats ..... are ..... defined politically" (Buzan et al. 1998: 141), the influence of the other sectors on matters that affect security must be filtered through the political sector and must be relevant to that sector: namely, when developments in other sectors threaten to have political meanings, contexts and consequences such as threats to state boundaries, political institutions, or governing regimes, these other variables must be taken into account as a part of politico-security calculus (Ayoob 1995: 8).

<sup>6</sup> As Hurrell (1995: 333) notes, "the range of factors that may be implicated in the growth of regionalism is very wide and includes economic, social, political, cultural and historic dimensions". Nonetheless, given that regionalism becomes a state or political project (Gamble and Payne 1996; Grugel and Hout 1999), regionalism can also be studied in the context of political dynamics that are socially constructed through various interactions among states.

<sup>7</sup> Given the core argument of Anderson (1991) in *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, as with nations, so regions can be seen as imagined communities which are brought into existence by human agency. In similar terms, Neumann (1994: 58) also argues that through the political project of region building, spokespersons for the community "imagine a certain spatial and chronological identity for a region and disseminate their imagined identity to others." In this context, politico-security regionalism in this paper can be seen as a political project of region building which is made and remade by regional states as main actors who attempt to deal with "security politics" surrounding conflict and cooperation.

component of anarchical international structure) are powerless to change the structure in which they find themselves (Viotti and Kauppi 1999: 66-76). Both perspectives are deterministic in character in which individual policymakers can do little to affect events despite a differing degree. In exploring the concept of politico-security regionalism driven by regional states as main actors, however, the term “regional states” is often used from the perspective of social constructivism so that it can be seen as constitutive elements in which intersubjective factors such as norms, identities and interests are not treated as fixed, but as being flexible, to be made and remade (e.g., Söderbaum 1998: 75-92). This means, by implication, that the concept of politico-security regionalism can be best understood in a constructivist perspective of IR that emphasizes the open-ended context of political projects to be constructed by “regional states” in response to external, as well as internal forces.

Despite the various strands of constructivism in IR theory,<sup>8</sup> what all varieties of constructivism share is a belief that no objects of our knowledge are independent of our (re)interpretations which produce social reality. Rather, social meaning is constructed and reconstructed by social interaction which creates certain mechanisms of norms, identities and interests that guide human actions (Adler 1997: 319-63).

According to Reus-Smit (2001: 216), constructivism can be identified with three basic claims that serve as a useful starting point: first, normative and ideational structures are just as important as material structures<sup>9</sup>; second, understanding how non-material structures condition actors’ identities is important because identities inform interests and, in turn, actions<sup>10</sup>; third, agents and structures are mutually constituted.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> By and large, there are four constructivist approaches to IR: modernist, modernist linguistic, radical and critical constructivism (see Adler 2002: 97-8).

<sup>9</sup> The first claim implies that instead of focusing solely on material incentives, constructivists emphasize the importance of shared knowledge, learning, ideational forces and normative and institutional structures (Hurrell 1995: 353). In this sense, as Hurrell (1995: 352) argues, the constructivist approach “focuses on regional awareness and regional identity, on the shared sense of belonging to a particular regional community, and on what has been called ‘cognitive regionalism’.”

<sup>10</sup> The second claim indicates that identities are important because they frame the interests of actors: that is, “identities are the basis of interests” (Wendt 1992: 398). For the relationship between identities and interests, Hopf (1998: 175) argues that “in telling you who you are, identities strongly imply a particular set of interests or preferences with respect to choices of action in particular domains, and with respect to particular actors.” In fact, constructivism focuses on the intersubjective nature of regional bodies, in which developing a shared sense of belonging or regional identity/interest is regarded as a significant part of institutionalizing regional cooperation. Unlike a rationalist approach, with the state very much as a given, the constructivist approach examines how the identities and interests of actors are constructed within the context of different processes of interaction, cultures and histories. Hence, the constructivist approach attempts to explore how the sharing of norms, ideas and identities is conducive to the character and emergence of regional cooperation and regional arrangements.

<sup>11</sup> The third claim is closely related with the “agent-structure problem” better known as social structuration theory of Giddens (1984). This agent-structure problem arises from “two uncontentious truths about social life: first, that human agency is the only moving force behind actions, events, and outcomes of the social world; and second, that human agency can be realized only in concrete historical circumstances that condition the possibilities for action and influence its course” (Dessler 1989: 443; Wendt 1987: 337). For example, the emergence of the SADC Organ (OPDS) could be

Although there is considerable division between different brands of constructivism, all constructivists — with the exception, perhaps, of the extreme postmodernist wing of radical constructivism — agree that reality is socially constructed (Adler 2002; Guzzini 2000), that ideational structures condition the identities and interests of agents and hence form their actions, and that the relationship between agent and structure is mutually constitutive (Wendt 1987; 1992; 1999). With regard to the mechanisms of politico-security regionalism in SADC, it is worth illuminating three concepts that emanate from constructivism that inform us important things about the way that politico-security regionalisms are constructed and reconstructed. These concepts are: institutions, norms and collective identity.

### 3. CONSTRUCTIVIST APPROACHES TO POLITICO-SECURITY REGIONALISM IN SADC

#### 3.1. Institutionalization

Constructivism focuses on the intersubjective nature of regional groups, including SADC, where developing a regional identity or shared sense of belonging is seen as an essential part of institutionalizing regional (security) cooperation (Hook and Kearns 1999: 3). In fact, institutions not only take such a rationalist or utilitarian role as the calculation of costs and benefits, but also constitute (regional) identity and interests through interactions among actors who are affecting the idea of each other (Acharya 2001: 22-4).

As Adler and Barnett (1998: 42) argue, although international relations theory traditionally views international institutions as constraints on state actions, institutions may be seen as “structures” or as “processes”: in fact, “a key constructivist point is that norms, rules and institutional contexts constitute actors and constrain choices.” Thus, using a constructivist perspective of IR to study the development of politico-security regionalism would mean going beyond the study of “how states should choose or how they should bargain” (Kowert 1998/99: 2). Rather, studying the effect and role of institutions from a constructivist perspective of IR helps us to examine how institutions promote four factors: first, the development of mutual trust; second, the forming of shared identity; third, the creation of regional culture or value system, involving democracy and human rights; finally, the cultivation of social learning which represents the capacity of social actors to manage and even transform reality by changing their beliefs of the material and social world and their identities (Adler and Barnett 1998: 42-4).

In terms of the scope and style of institutionalization in SADC, the establishment of 1996 SADC Organ (OPDS) is the case in point. The Organ resulted in the emergence of a formal regional security mechanism out of an informal and an *ad hoc* style of the FLS, which eventually helped the SADC member states to institutionalize political and security

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realized in a new and changing international milieu and a recognition that many of the problems and threats faced by the region which “can only be addressed through increased cooperation” in the post-Cold War era (Van Aardt 1997: 23). Nonetheless, the OPDS(C) was constructed by the member states of SADC in its own ways: for the OPDS(C), although SADC leaders sought to consolidate a formal regional security structure with signing the OPDSC Protocol, SADC committed itself to the principle of “national sovereignty” by opting for the consensual decision-making structure within SADC (SADC OPDSC Protocol 2002).

cooperation in the form of OPDS. In the post-Cold War era, although SADC has been striving to invent new regional security frameworks to increase regional security, in fact, the OPDS resulted from the historical development of the FLS, the Inter-State Defense and Security Committee (ISDSC), SADCC, SADC and the Association of Southern African States (ASAS). That is, the establishment of the OPDS has been a product both of history and evolution. This implies that the SADC member states have sought to develop the “institutionalization of regional security” within the SADC Organ since the end of the Cold War.<sup>12</sup>

Nevertheless, SADC was initially incapable of placing the OPDS under the structure of SADC as a whole. The 1996 SADC Summit stipulated that the Organ would “function independently” of other SADC structures (SADC Communiqué 1996). Owing to this decision, SADC was put to have two summit level bodies with no clear authority relations between them. Indeed, this led to the rivalry between South Africa and Zimbabwe. Whereas Zimbabwe insisted that the Organ was an autonomous security mechanism, South Africa argued that the Organ should be subordinate to the SADC Summit, which the SADC Treaty declared “the supreme policy-making institution of SADC” under Article of 10(1) (SADC 1992).

While the SADC Organ had initially been headed by Zimbabwe’s Mugabe, SADC members at the Blantyre Summit in August 2001 decided to bring the Organ under SADC control. The formalization of the SADC Organ with the signing of the Protocol (on Politics, Defense and Security Cooperation) allowed SADC members to deal with regional security affairs within a legal framework. This implies that the signing of the Protocol would clarify what the member states can and cannot do under the auspices of the “new” SADC Organ. Thus, the structure, mechanisms, and functions of the Organ will be controlled by the new Protocol on OPDSC. The Protocol signed by SADC Heads of State and Governments in August 2001 provides for a fairly elaborate structure of the Organ (SADC OPDSC Protocol 2002).

- the Organ is guided by a troika (composed of the current, outgoing and incoming Chair) reporting to the SADC Summit;
- under the troika there is the Ministerial Committee comprising SADC Ministers responsible for foreign affairs, defense, public security and state security;
- under this Committee two ministerial subcommittees are devised;
- one is an Inter-State Politics and Diplomacy Committee (ISPDC), to be set up comprising ministers responsible for foreign affairs to fulfill the objectives of the Organ relating to politics and diplomacy;
- the other is an Inter-State Defense and Security Committee (ISDSC), which has been existent for more than 20 years, composed of ministers of defense, public and state security. ISDSC will enhance regional confidence building, including the fields of disaster management, satellite communications, peacekeeping training and doctrine, and public security issues such

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<sup>12</sup> Prior to the creation of SADC, in particular, the ISDSC (which was formed in 1975 as an important structure of the FLS) continued to exist as an institution of the SADC Organ even after dissolution of the FLS. Like the FLS, the ISDSC is not based on a treaty, charter or constitution. Nor does it have a permanent headquarters or secretariat. However, it is more formally structured than the FLS. Three sub-committees — Defense, Public Security, and State Security — were set up to facilitate the ISDSC’s work, (see Berman and Sams 2000: 160-67; and also Matlosa 2001: 414).

as drug trafficking and firearm-smuggling.

In terms of the structure and function of the OPDSC, the 2001 Blantyre Summit solved some of the major problems that had hampered the work of the Organ. The new Organ would be run by a leadership troika — following the same principle as the SADC chairmanship. That is, the SADC Organ was integrated into the SADC structure and report to the SADC Summit, rather than acting as an independent institution in the tradition of the FLS. In this way, the SADC member states attempted to consolidate a formal regional security structure within SADC in developing a common approach to the SADC Organ and its area of operation.

Meanwhile, for SADC(C), although South Africa was strong enough to dominate other regional states in military and economic terms during the apartheid era, South Africa has attempted to transform its position (as a regional hegemon) towards a “pivotal”<sup>13</sup> state in regional order since the demise of apartheid (Habib and Selinyane 2004: 49-60). In terms of peace and security in Africa, this means that South Africa attempts to pursue a policy of “non-hegemonic cooperation” through multilateral organizations like SADC, AU, the NAM, and the Commonwealth (Habib and Selinyane 2004: 52). At the same time, South Africa also appeared as a regional powerbroker not only with the capacity to back up political commitment, but also with the necessary financial resources in addressing regional security problems.<sup>14</sup>

What is noted is that a multilateral approach among SADC members has largely been placed under South Africa’s leadership. Since South Africa has projected itself as an “emerging (middle) power”<sup>15</sup> (Schoeman 2003: 349; Van der Westhuizen 1998: 435-55) with support from the West in the post-apartheid period, it is likely that SADC may be influenced by the West, constructing its type and style of regional approach to security cooperation in the region. This means that SADC has attempted to take advantage of multilateral organizations such as the UN which is largely influenced by the West, particularly, given the structure of the Security Council.

In this period, the SADC member states seem to have largely focused on collective security and/or collective defense under the SADC Organ within the region. The objectives of the SADC Organ (OPDS) laid down collective security arrangements which are largely associated with a “regional alliance system” for the SADC security structure (SADC Communique 1996; Hough 1998: 25).

Nevertheless, given the fact that the term “cooperative security” tends to connote consultation rather than confrontation and reassurance rather than deterrence, SADC seems

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<sup>13</sup> The term ‘pivotal’ gives a significant character to South Africa’s foreign policy that implicitly emphasizes multilateralism, non-hegemonic behavior, and partnership (see Habib and Selinyane 2004: 53).

<sup>14</sup> The involvement of South Africa in the peace processes in Burundi and the DRC demonstrates that South Africa has, to some extent, committed itself to play a leadership role in addressing regional security problems (see Schoeman 2003; Habib and Selinyane 2004).

<sup>15</sup> South Africa is often regarded as an emerging power, referring to its position as a regional leader and its position in the international or global political system as a feasible middle power: in terms of its role as a middle power, South Africa (that is considered to be ‘emerging’) would seem to have a role somewhat different from established, developed middle powers such as Canada and the Scandinavian states (Schoeman 2003: 349-65; also Van der Westhuizen 1998: 435-55).

to have committed itself to cooperative security approaches in addressing regional conflicts. SADC is seeking the principle of non-confrontation and non-use of force, placing an emphasis on the development of dialogue and consultation with external organizations, including the UN, and various NGOs (namely, second-track or semi-official security dialogue). For SADC, Article 11(2) of the OPDSC Protocol (which promotes consultation with the UN Security Council) paves the way for SADC to collaborate with external organizations like the UN in addressing regional security problems (SADC OPDSC Protocol 2002).

Moreover, SADC attempted to contribute to efforts toward regional confidence building through the SADC Mutual Defense Pact (SADC Mutual Defense Pact 2003). Considering that cooperative security approaches are geared towards the development of mutuality of security, based on mutual reassurance rather than deterrence, reassurance in SADC has been developed through increased “transparency” of military forces and confidence in security-building measures (CSBMs). Thus, mutual reassurance has been pursued by SADC, at least in theory, in order not only to reduce the mistrust between member states, but also to build confidence among the regional states through discussion, negotiation, cooperation and compromise.

Even though SADC is concerned about managing regional conflicts by “peaceful means,” it seems to be also interested in committing itself to “hard regionalism” in terms of conflict management. Within the context of a legally binding security architecture, the SADC OPDSC Protocol stipulates the jurisdiction of the Organ by stressing the approach to “resolution” of regional conflicts. Moreover, according to Article 11(1d) of the OPDSC Protocol, “the Organ shall seek to ensure that the Signatories adhere to and enforce all sanctions and arms embargoes imposed on any party by the United Nations Security Council” (SADC OPDSC Protocol 2002). In this regard, SADC, as both Articles of 11(3a) and 11(1d) of OPDSC Protocol illustrate, explicitly stipulates how and to what extent the UN can intervene in its regional affairs, which opens the door for the SADC member states to rely upon hard security or militaristic approaches to addressing regional conflicts.

With regard to the character and nature of institutionalization, SADC can be found in whether and to what extent the organization is willing to commit itself to “soft” or “hard” regionalism in terms of conflict management. On the surface at least, of institutional structure, SADC has attempted to orient itself towards a legally binding security architecture by restructuring not only the SADC Organ but the whole organization.

### **3.2. Norm-based Conflict Management**

The concern with norms makes constructivists see actors and structure much differently from the rationalist approaches to the study of politico-security regionalism. Although there exist different views between neo-realism and neo-liberal institutionalism in terms of the possibilities for interstate cooperation in regional and global structure, both approaches assume a world controlled by rational actors, whose relations are formulated by the balance of material power (Jervis 1999: 42-61). Nonetheless, norms are intersubjective beliefs about the social and natural world that define actors, their situations, and the possibilities of action. Norms are beliefs rooted in and reproduced through social practice (Wendt 1995: 73-4; Jepperson, et al. 1996: 54).

According to Krasner (1983: 2), “norms are standards of behavior defined in terms of rights and obligations,” In fact, the definition and functions of norms vary. Kratochwill



(1989: 70) offers three ordering functions of norms: first, by “ruling out” certain methods of individual goal seeking through the stipulation of forbearances, norms define the area within which conflict can be bounded; second, within the restricted set of permissible goals and strategies, rules that take the actors’ goals as given can create schemes or schedules for individual or joint enjoyment of scarce objects; third, norms enable the parties whose goals and/or strategies conflict to sustain a “discourse” on their grievances, to negotiate a solution, or to ask a third party for a decision on the basis of commonly accepted rules, norms and principles.

Although many theories of IR, including neo-liberal institutionalism, recognize the importance of norms, constructivism allows for a much deeper understanding of norms in forming international relations (Acharya 2001: 24). As Katzenstein (1996: 5) notes, norms play two particular roles within international organizations and regional mechanisms. First, norms prescribe the proper enactment of an already defined identity, thus having “regulative” effects that specify standards of proper behavior. This means that the regulative effects of norms contribute to constraining the activities of actors. Second, norms define the identity of an actor, thus having “constitutive” effects that specify what actions will cause relevant others to recognize a particular identity. That is, norms not only prescribe and regulate behavior (the regulative effect), they also define and constitute identities (the constitutive effect). To put it differently, given that the concept of state is not only constituted by international norms, but also constrained by them (Biersteker 2002: 157-76), norms can be seen as fulfilling a constitutive function as well as a regulative one.

SADC(C) has tried to utilize political norms in conflict management. During the Cold War, SADCC established the 1980 Lusaka Declaration for the primary purpose of economic liberation in Southern Africa. By adopting the Declaration, the SADCC member states also provided four basic objectives to address regional security problems: (1) reduction of economic dependence, particularly, but not only, on South Africa, (2) the forging of links to create a genuine and equitable regional integration (3) the mobilization of resources to promote the implementation of national, interstate and regional policies, and (4) concerted action to secure international cooperation within the framework of a strategy for economic liberation (Southern African Record 1987:4).

However, sovereignty was a core norm of SADCC except when it came to apartheid South Africa. Although Article 2 of the OAU, which impacted on the evolution and framework of the FLS as the antecedent of SADCC, stipulates the norms of non-intervention and state sovereignty, the OAU leaders agreed that South Africa should be excluded from the protection of the organization’s norms because South Africa was (then) a non-member (Klotz 1995: 76). Under the circumstances, SADCC as a response to apartheid South Africa intended not to commit itself to the Westphalian norms such as non-interference in internal affairs, non-use of force in interstate relations and pacific settlement of disputes. Rather, SADCC members appropriated such continental and global norms as “racial equality” so as to make the organization serve as a unifying focus for regional security cooperation.

After the end of the Cold War, although SADC pursued the principle of pacific settlement of disputes in its own region with a view to addressing regional security problems by peaceful means, SADC seems to be also interested in using explicitly legally-oriented words such as conflict resolution. Moreover, SADC established the Mutual Defense Pact in 2003 in order to make provision for the member states to protect one another from external aggressions on their own intent and purposes.

Nonetheless, given the fact that SADC is unable to form a formal military alliance like NATO owing mainly to lack of military capabilities, the regional group seems to prefer the method of diplomatic negotiations to the one of militaristic measures. For instance, as Article 11(1b) and 11(1c) in the OPDSC Protocol emphasize the importance of peaceful settlement of disputes, it can largely be assumed that the principle of pacific settlement of disputes in SADC is significant (SADC OPDSC Protocol 2002). Hence, the emergence of the 2003 SADC Mutual Defense Pact cannot be seen merely as a move toward a more militaristic direction in SADC's security integration, but rather as a political scheme for the SADC member states to develop the diplomatic means to be applied prior to a scheme of armed force as a last resort (Van Nieuwkerk 2003: 2-3). In fact, the primary and root causes of 2003 SADC Mutual Defense Pact (which were intricately embedded in the course of development of the past regional projects, including the FLS alliance, ISDSC, SADCC, SADC, ASAS, OPDS and currently OPDSC) can and should be understood in such unique historical and political contexts as the racial confrontation between South Africa and SADCC members during the apartheid era, and the rivalry between South Africa and Zimbabwe in the post-apartheid period (e.g. Ngoma 2004: 412-413; Schoeman 2004: 10).

In this regard, it can be assumed that such political norms as the pacific settlement of disputes in regional conflict management are open to be restructured and applied to its own historical and social context. In terms of managing conflicts in SADC, therefore, it is important to note that when the norm of pacific settlement of disputes is applied to regional context, it is not automatically given, but rather produced and reproduced through the various interactions of the political elites of each regional group. When the SADC(C) member states recognized their limits to resolve regional conflicts by themselves, though, they attempted to engage external powers to address the conflicts with the intention of temporarily allowing the intervention of the outside powers, at the same time compromising the norms of non-use of force and/or pacific settlement of disputes.<sup>16</sup>

In the post-Cold War era, moreover, SADC has placed emphasis on conventional international norms such as non-interference in dealing with regional security problems. Given the fact that the regional group is political entities with "weak" state structures and a lack of strong regime legitimacy, the norm of non-interference should be understood in the context of the domestic security concerns of regional member states in SADC. That is, one of the main reasons for SADC to adhere to the norm of non-interference can be found in the context of the organization's search for internal stability and regime security. After the end of the Cold War, it has been argued that the primary sources of threat to the national security of SADC states are not external, but internal (Nathan and Honwana 1995: 6).

However, the norm of non-interference does not mean a sense of indifference towards each other. In fact, SADC took the lead in responding to the DRC conflict after the leaders found that peace and stability in the region could not be realized without regional solidarity on security problems. In addition, regional confidence security-building measures (CSBMs), which have the potential to erode the norm of non-interference, have been advocated by SADC in the Mutual Defense Pact. Nonetheless, considering that CSBMs are concerned

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<sup>16</sup> Unlike conventional alliance, which was largely formed in line with the East-West rivalry during the Cold War, SADCC as an antecedent of SADC opted to follow an unconventional alliance that was inclusive to the Western as well as the Eastern bloc (e.g. Khadiagala 1994; Sesay 1985). In the post-Cold War period, SADC ambassadors actively lobbied at the UN for the acceptance of the responsibilities in resolving the regional conflicts, including the DRC conflicts (ICG 2004).

about the issue of a “non-aggression treaty” (Hough 1998: 28), CSBMs in the SADC Mutual Defense Pact should be understood in the context of norms such as non-aggression and/or non-interference in the region. By implication, thus, this ambivalence leaves room for SADC not only to apply such complex norms as non-interference to each situation as suitably, but also to develop “interactions that are interconnected in unanticipated and non-linear ways” (Adler 2002: 110).

For SADC, norms such as non-interference are not fixed in their definition and functions, but rather open to be structured and restructured in the member states’ own intent and interest. To put it differently, norms not only regulate behavior, they also constitute new interests and identities (Katzenstein 1996: 5). In this context, it can be argued that while the regulatory effect of norms refers to a rationalist-behavioral conception of process in which identities and interests are exogenous to interaction, the constitutive effect of norms refers to a cognitive, intersubjective one in which they are endogenous (Katzenstein 1996: 5; Wendt, 1992: 394). Thus, the norm of non-interference for SADC should be understood in the constitutive context as well as the regulatory. Yet, although the regulatory effect of norms in relation to formal and legalistic rules was pointed out in the OPDSC for SADC, in reality, the constitutive effect of norms (in relation to such cognitive factors as intersubjective knowledge, ideas and identity) occupies a key position not only in driving political actors’ behavior, but also in understanding the mechanisms of conflict management in SADC.

### **3.3. Collective (Regional) Identity as Exceptionalism**

Collective identity refers to “positive identification” with the welfare of the others, which is regarded as a “cognitive extension” of the Self rather than as independent: in this context, collective identity can be regarded as an essential element for the sense of “solidarity, community and loyalty” (Wendt 1996: 52). According to Hasenclever, et al. (1997: 186), collective identity implies that regional actors respect each other as members of a community in which decisions are taken on a consensus basis. By implication, for SADC, this means that collective (regional) identity can be understood as the basis of regional consensus such that peace and stability in the region cannot be realized without regional solidarity on security problems.

Collective identity is a basis for “feelings of solidarity, community, and loyalty” and for “collective definitions of interests.” Yet, this does not mean that state actors no longer calculate costs and benefits, but that they do so on a “higher level of social aggregation”; this then facilitates collective action by “increasing diffused reciprocity and the willingness to bear costs without selective incentives” (Wendt 1996: 53).

In searching for regional identity during the Cold War era, the SADCC states committed themselves to the informality and decentralization of the organization, which contributed to the creation of a collective identity in the region. In fact, the orientation of SADCC towards informal and decentralized structure through a sectoral responsibility approach helped the organization to construct a spirit of “we” among its members (Mandaza and Tostensen 1994: 72). As a result, SADCC’s commitment to the informality and decentralization of the organization was ultimately conducive not only to protecting each member country’s national dignity and sovereignty, but also to consolidating a collective regional identity by means of leaving room for flexibility or exceptions for regional leaders to search for.

Yet, the SADC member states not only have divided perceptions of what are in their national interests relating to regional conflicts, but also lack such a certain convergence of

value systems as liberal democracy. For SADC, the members remain divergent with regard to their post-colonial political setting, level of economic development, and cultural/ideological make-up. Nonetheless, SADC tried to promote the coordination of the different national interests into a harmonized sub-regional scheme through which the member states gradually began to form collective regional identities with a view not only to increasing the cooperative spirit amongst the member states, but also to reducing the likelihood of use of force in inter-state relations (Ngoma 2005). This implies that the collective identity formation in SADC cannot be regarded simply as an end-result out of a certain convergence of self-interests and/or egoistic values, but rather as a process that leads to the “structural transformation of the Westphalian states system from anarchy to authority” (Wendt, 1994: 393). In this context, Acharya (1998: 206) argues as follows:

Collective identities among states are constructed by their social interactions, rather than given exogenously to them by human nature ..... or ..... the international distribution of power ..... regional cooperation among states is not necessarily a function of immutable or pre-ordained variables such as physical location, common historical experience ..... Rather, regionalism may emerge and consolidate itself within an intersubjective setting of dynamic interactions .....

Elaborating collective identity, Wendt (1996:53) also used as an example the difference between alliances and collective security arrangements, which are both instructive. On one hand, he considers alliances as “temporary coalitions of self-interested states” who join together for instrumental reasons in response to a specific threat. As soon as the threat is gone, the basis for the coalition also evaporates and the alliance gets disbanded. With collective security arrangements, on the other hand, states make commitments to multilateral action against non-specific threats. In such multilateral institutions, collective identity is not a *sine qua non* for its creation, but it nevertheless provides an important foundation for member states to increase the willingness to act based on “generalized principles of conduct” and diffuse reciprocity (Wendt 1996: 53; also Job 1997: 167-68).

With regard to security structures and/or systems, SADC sought to search for its own approaches to conflict management in direct or indirect opposition to the security institutions and practices in Europe. For example, SADC did not form a formal military alliance like the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) owing mainly to the lack of military capabilities, but rather it has opted for its own styles to respond to regional security problems. This implies that SADC(C) seems to have searched for a collective regional identity so as to consider itself as a distinct regional group from the European one, in which it could redefine regional security mechanisms within its own regional context. Indeed, although the SADC Mutual Defense Pact, under collective self-defense, makes provision for the member states to protect each other from external aggression, the SADC member countries do not commit themselves to the principle of “an attack on one is an attack on all,” as is the case for NATO (SADC Mutual Defense Pact 2003).

In terms of collective security arrangements, in addition, although SADC seems to have largely focused on collective security and/or collective defense under the SADC Organ within the region (Hough 1998: 25-6), it did not establish a genuine meaning of collective security system in the region. Given the assumption that the idea of collective security is based on a preponderance of physical force allied against any aggressor as well as a legal agreement to regulate international behavior (Snyder 1999: 108), in reality, it will be difficult

for SADC states to develop self-reliant collective security systems owing mainly to the fact that most of the members in the regional group are composed of weak states. In this sense, it may be inferred that SADC is, to some extent, lacking the (complete?) level of collective identity in particular terms of collective security arrangements as a measure of such a collective identity.

Nevertheless, as Wendt (1996: 53) argued, collective identity is not equivalent (or essential) to such multilateral institutions as a collective security arrangement. For SADC, what is important for a collective regional identity is the processes of such positive identification as the spirit of rising or enhanced cooperation among regional actors, which are reproduced and transformed by their intersubjective ideas and practices. In this sense, as Acharya (2001: 29, 202) notes, the emergence of cooperative security can also be considered as an important criterion to examine the meaning and value of a collective regional identity. In this regard, SADC is attempting to promote “inclusive regionalism” as an important component of the principle of “cooperative security”: for SADC, the promotion of the interoperability between SADC and non-SADC organizations as implied in Article 11(2c) of OPDSC. This demonstrates that SADC seems to be developing a collective regional identity through such multilateral efforts as positive, inclusive and cooperative approaches to regional security problems.

Summing up, the emergence of both the OPDSC Protocol in 2001 and the SADC Mutual Defense Pact in 2003 has opened the way for the member states to deal with military conflicts in the region. But the Defense Pact does not go further in legally committing members to military enforcement action than what the Protocol already did (Hammerstad 2004: 230). Although the creation of the OPDS(C) and the Defense Pact illustrates that the “regional grouping ... desires to work as one on matters of defense and security” (Ngoma 2003: 25), there remain a number of problems in achieving the goal of SADC’s security integration. Therefore, both the OPDS(C) and the Defense Pact cannot be viewed purely as legal tools in resolving security conflicts in the region. Instead, they were made and remade by SADC leaders to provide security mechanisms to be largely utilized as a political rather than legal means.

For SADC, collective identity can be illustrated in the context of regional flexibility and/or exceptionalism, which is developed through constitutive interactions and which form the basis of its collective action. As collective identity is a basis for “feeling of solidarity, community, and loyalty” (Wendt 1996: 53), SADC states seem to have attempted to forge collective identities in their own regional context. By implication, thus, this indicates that SADC plays a critical role not only in bringing forth a sense of collective (regional) identity, but also in constructing the mechanisms of regional security cooperation in its own way.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

After the end of apartheid and the Cold War, SADC members attempted to restructure the regional security architecture. Despite a number of flaws in developing the security mechanism(s), SADC leaders were, to some extent, successful in achieving regional solidarity and consensus on integrating their security structures. As noted earlier, the SADC member countries have evolved the degree of formalization and institutionalization of security frameworks in the region even before SADC(C) was born.

Nonetheless, SADC kept maintaining the focus on such political norms as sovereignty,

equality and territorial integrity. The deep commitment of the organization to these norms can be understood in the context of regional identities which are closely interrelated with their unique historical experiences as well as political dynamics. Moreover, what is important for the leaders of SADC is to commit themselves to political norms such as national sovereignty in which individual members attempt to allow for a flexible approach to regional security problems. In fact, the commitment of the members of SADC to the principle of the modern Westphalian state system shows that the member states are still preoccupied with the search for internal stability and regime security. As examined in the cases of the insertion of Article 6(3) of the SADC Mutual Defense Pact, therefore, the member states of SADC appear to re-emphasize the continued validity of the norm of non-interference not only to protect national sovereignty, but also to improve the level of flexibility and/or exceptionality in addressing regional security problems.

In examining the mechanisms of politico-security regionalisms in SADC, it can be assumed that politico-security regionalism in SADC should not be treated as unchangeable and fixed entities, but rather as continually evolving and flexible ones to change and transform the international milieu and social context through various interactions. The key point here is the effect and role of constructivism in particular terms of the proposition of Wendt (1992) that "anarchy is what states make of it." In this context, thus, focusing on the utility of constructivism in analyzing the SADC politico-security regionalism, this paper has shown that a constructivist perspective of IR is useful as an analytical tool to allow for the possibility of developing world regions to change the disadvantaged situations which contribute to understanding and explaining the mechanisms of politico-security regionalism in SADC.

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